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ABSTRACT

The model minority image of Asian Americans authorizes the flat denial of racism and structures of racial dominance and silences those who are not economically successful. This book explores how young people incorporate, interpret, and make meaning of the "model minority" stereotype in the context of their lived experience in school and community. It presents an ethnographic study of a public high school and identifies four distinct identities young Asian Americans constructed for themselves (Asian American, Asian, Korean, and Asian new wave). How these identities relate to each other and to the model minority stereotype was studied through contact with 87 Asian American high school students and semistructured interviews with 47. Additional information was obtained through in-depth contact with eight student informants. While the model minority stereotype may appear positive or flattering, it actually is dangerous because it tells Asians and other minorities how to behave and it promotes an invisibility that masks their problems. (Contains 119 references.) (SLD)

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